



Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy & Procedure

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Approved by Palwi Sood , Managing Director Version date:

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Future Connect Training

Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy & Procedure

(Applicable to Commercial Training, ESFA/DfE Funded Provision, and Skills Bootcamps)

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1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all assessments conducted by Future Connect Training (FC Training) are:

- Valid – accurately measuring what they are intended to.
- Reliable – consistent across time, assessors, and learners.
- Authentic – reflecting the learner's own work and skills.
- Fair – free from bias, malpractice, or maladministration.
- Compliant – meeting DfE, ESFA, Ofqual, awarding body, and Ofsted standards.

This policy also provides a structured framework for preventing, detecting, investigating, and resolving malpractice or maladministration in assessments.

2. Aims and Objectives

Aims

- To uphold the integrity, credibility, and reputation of FC Training, our awarding bodies, and Skills Bootcamp provision.
- To safeguard learners, staff, and employers by ensuring assessments are conducted fairly and ethically.
- To ensure DfE Skills Bootcamp, ESFA, and Ofqual compliance at all times.
- To ensure allegations of malpractice are handled sensitively, promptly, and without prejudice.
- To embed a culture of honesty, integrity, and accountability across all training and assessment activity.

Objectives

- To define malpractice and maladministration with clear examples.
- To make learners, staff, subcontractors, and employers aware of their responsibilities.
- To introduce preventative measures that minimise the risk of malpractice.
- To outline a clear, staged process for investigating suspected malpractice.
- To ensure learners and staff understand consequences of malpractice.
- To provide appeal and escalation routes (internally and externally).
- To ensure all malpractice cases are logged, monitored, and reviewed to improve future practice.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All learners on commercial courses, funded programmes, and Skills Bootcamps.
- All staff, trainers, assessors, IQAs, and subcontractors.
- Employers/partners involved in workplace or project-based assessments.
- External verifiers, awarding bodies, and commissioning agencies where applicable.

4. Definitions

Malpractice (deliberate wrongdoing)

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism (copying from another source without acknowledgement).
- Collusion (unauthorised collaboration between learners).

- Contract cheating (use of third parties to produce work).
- Fabrication/falsification of evidence or records.
- Impersonation (one learner completing work for another).
- Copying or cheating during supervised assessment.
- Bribery, intimidation, or coercion of assessors or staff.
- Misuse of technology (unauthorised AI tools, internet resources, or shared drives).
- Facilitating malpractice by assisting others.

Maladministration (poor practice or mismanagement)

Examples include:

- Failing to authenticate learner evidence.
- Inadequate assessment planning or record-keeping.
- Improper conduct of assessments.
- Late or incorrect submission of learner results to awarding bodies.
- Breach of DfE/ESFA rules for Skills Bootcamps (e.g., misreporting attendance).
- Errors in the management of learner registration or certification.

5. Responsibilities

- Learners: Must complete and sign authenticity declarations; must not engage in malpractice.
- Assessors: Must apply assessment standards consistently, authenticate evidence, and report suspected malpractice.
- IQA/Quality Team: Must sample work rigorously and identify irregularities.
- Delivery Managers: Must ensure staff are trained and procedures are followed.
- Employers: Must not influence assessment outcomes or support malpractice.
- Senior Management: Must ensure malpractice is reported to awarding bodies and regulators when required.

6. Preventative Measures

To minimise malpractice:

1. Learners are briefed during induction and IAG sessions on malpractice risks and consequences.
2. Assessors and IQAs are trained on plagiarism detection, assessment monitoring, and malpractice reporting.
3. Use of plagiarism detection software (e.g., Turnitin or equivalent).
4. Authenticity declarations required for all learner submissions.
5. Regularly updated assessment tasks to avoid recycling of materials.
6. Supervised sessions for practical evidence collection.
7. Oral questioning and observation to validate learner understanding.
8. Secure handling of learner data and assessment records.
9. Spot checks and random sampling of work.
10. Skills Bootcamp contracts include explicit clauses on malpractice prevention and reporting.

7. Procedure in the Event of Suspected Malpractice

Stage 1 – Reporting

- Any suspicion must be reported immediately to the Designated Malpractice Officer (DMO).
- Reports may come from staff, learners, employers, external verifiers, or whistleblowers.
- Allegations can be made in writing, verbally, or anonymously.

Stage 2 – Initial Review (within 5 working days)

- The DMO reviews the allegation and evidence.
- The accused (learner/staff) is informed in writing of:
 - Nature of allegation.
 - Evidence available.
 - Possible consequences.
- The accused is invited to respond (written statement or interview).

Stage 3 – Formal Investigation (within 20 working days)

- A Senior Manager (independent of the case) leads the investigation.
- Evidence sources may include:
 - Learner submissions.
 - Plagiarism detection reports.
 - Assessment records, logs, and witness statements.
 - IT access logs and communication records.
- Both parties (complainant and accused) have the right to representation and to submit evidence.

Stage 4 – Outcome and Decision

- The investigation panel determines whether malpractice/maladministration occurred.
- Outcomes may include:
 - No case to answer.
 - Malpractice not proven, but maladministration identified (process improvement required).
 - Malpractice proven – sanctions applied.
- Written decision sent to all parties within 10 working days of conclusion.

8. Possible Sanctions

For Learners:

- Formal warning.
- Re-submission of work under controlled conditions.
- Invalidation of results/withdrawal of certificate.
- Suspension or removal from programme.
- Notification to awarding body, ESFA, or DfE (Skills Bootcamps).

For Staff/Subcontractors:

- Written warning.
- Mandatory retraining.
- Suspension pending investigation.
- Termination of contract/employment.
- Referral to awarding bodies or regulatory agencies.

For Employers/Stakeholders:

- Withdrawal of learner placements.
- Termination of partnership agreements.
- Notification to DfE/ESFA where funded provision is compromised.

9. Appeals Against Malpractice Decisions

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of outcome.
- Appeal is reviewed by an independent senior manager/panel not involved in the investigation.
- Panel may uphold, amend, or overturn original decision.
- If dissatisfied after internal appeal, escalation routes are:
 - Awarding body (for regulated qualifications).
 - ESFA/DfE (for funded Skills Bootcamps).
 - External Ombudsman or regulator where applicable.

10. Confidentiality & Whistleblowing

- Allegations handled confidentially.
- Whistleblowers protected under the Whistleblowing Policy.
- Anonymous reports may be considered, especially in safeguarding or harassment cases.

11. Monitoring and Reporting

- All malpractice cases are recorded in the Malpractice Register.
- Termly review by the Quality Committee and reported to Senior Leadership.

- Annual analysis of malpractice trends feeds into the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- Where malpractice impacts external standards, awarding bodies, the ESFA, and/or the DfE will be notified immediately.

12. Review of Policy

- Reviewed annually by the Quality Manager.
- Updates made in line with:
 - DfE Skills Bootcamp guidance.
 - ESFA funding rules.
 - Ofqual awarding body requirements.